

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SINGAP 01726 170611Z
ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 INSE-00 /029 W
-----043623 170617Z /17

P R 170130Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 76
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
USMISSION GENEVA

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SREF, SN
SUBJECT: VISIT OF WORLD VISION INTL PRESIDENT W. STEPHEN
MOONEYHAM AND DIRECTOR HENRY A. BABBER

REF: STATE 091555 (NOTAL) AND PREVIOUS

1. DIRECTOR BARBER OF WORLD VISION INTL. MET WITH EMBOFF
APRIL 11, TO DISCUSS INDOCHINESE REFUGEE MATTERS. HE WAS
GIVEN A GENERAL BRIEFING ON THE PRESENT SITUATION IN
SINGAPORE AND REFUGEE PROCESSING PROCEDURES. APPOINTMENTS WERE
SCHEDULED FOR BARBER TO MEET WITH SINGAPORE JOINT VOLAG
REP., CYRIL CHEW AND FOR THE PRESIDENT OF WORLD VISION, MR.
MOONEYHAM, ACCOMPANIED BY MR. BARBER TO MEET WITH AMBASSADOR
AND DCM THE FOLLOWING DAY.

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2. IN MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR APRIL 12, MOONEYHAM DESCRIBED
THE ACTIVITIES OF WORLD VISION IN GLOBAL WELFARE AND RELIEF
PROGRAMS. HE EXPLAINED THAT WITH WORLD VISION CAPITAL NOW
AT FIFTY-FIVE MILLION DOLLARS, THE ORGANIZATION PLANNED TO
EXPAND ITS ACTIVITIES BY ESTABLISHING A PROJECT TO PURCHASE
A VESSEL TO SEARCH FOR AND RESCUE BOAT CASE REFUGEES FROM THE

SOUTH CHINA SEA.

3. THE AMBASSADOR, RECALLING THE PROBLEMS CREATED BY AN UN-SUCCESSFUL SIMILAR PROJECT OPERATED BY THE WORLD CONFERENCE ON RELIGION AND PEACE (WCRP) LAST YEAR, POINTED OUT THE DISRUPTIVE INFLUENCE SUCH A PROJECT COULD HAVE ON THE CONTINUING SUPPORT FROM REFUGEE ACCEPTING COUNTRIES WITH ALREADY ESTABLISHED PROGRAMS, THE PROBABLE HARDENING OF ATTITUDES BY COUNTRIES OF FIRST ASYLUM AND THE HARDSHIP THE REFUGEES THEMSELVES MIGHT EXPERIENCE IF THE PROJECT WAS NOT PROPERLY MANAGED. THE QUESTION OF WHERE THE REFUGEES COULD BE LANDED WAS A FURTHER PROBLEM. DISCUSSION OF THIS POINT LED TO MENTION OF PRIME MINISTER LEE'S OFFER OF AN ISLAND TRANSIT CAMP FOR BOAT CASE REFUGEES. MR. MOONEYHAM, ALREADY BRIEFED BY THE DEPARTMENT ON THE GOS REQUIREMENT FOR "BANKABLE GUARANTEES", REMARKED THAT HE WOULD EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF WHETHER A WORLD VISION OFFER TO FINANCE AND OPERATE THE CAMP WOULD IN ANY WAY SOFTEN GOS POLICY WHEN HE MET WITH MFA PERMSEC, CHIA CHEONG FOOK, ON APRIL 13.

4. MR. MOONEYHAM LATER INFORMED EMBOFFS THAT HE HAD RAISED SUBJECT OF POSSIBLE WORLD VISION OFFER TO FINANCE AND OPERATE ISLAND TRANSIT CAMP AT HIS MEETING WITH PERMSEC CHIA CHEONG FOOK. LATTER HAD INDICATED THAT QUESTION OF FINANCING WAS NOT MAJOR CONCERN OF GOS, SINCE UNHCR HAD ALREADY OFFERED TO FINANCE AND OPERATE CAMP. MAIN PROBLEM WAS THAT OF "BANKABLE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GUARANTEES".

5. MR. MOONEYHAM PAID A SECOND CALL ON AMBASSADOR APRIL 14. HE TOLD AMBASSADOR THAT, IN LIGHT OF HIS DISCUSSION IN SINGAPORE, PLANS FOR OPERATING A SHIP IN SOUTH CHINA SEA HAD BEEN SOMEWHAT MODIFIED. SHIP WOULD NOT HAVE MISSION OF PICKING UP REFUGEES AT SEA AND DELIVERING THEM TO CAMPS. INSTEAD, SHIP WOULD BE STAFFED WITH DOCTORS, NURSES AND MECHANICS AND STOCKED WITH FOOD, SUPPLIES, ETC. ITS MISSION WOULD BE TO ASSIST REFUGEE BOATS AT SEA, REPAIRING THEM, PROVISIONING THEM, AND PROVIDING SAILING DIRECTORS. SHIP WOULD BE OPERATED OUT OF SINGAPORE. HE HAD DISCUSSED THESE PLANS WITH SINGAPORE OFFICIALS, WHO HAD INDICATED THAT THEY DOUBTED GOS WOULD HAVE ANY OBJECTION. A NEW ZEALAND NATIONAL WOULD BE IN ACTUAL CHARGE OF OPERATING SHIP. MOONEYHAM STATED THAT HE WAS NOT ASKING AMBASSADOR'S ADVICE ON THIS PROJECT, BUT WAS MERELY TELLING HIM ABOUT IT AS ACT OF COURTESY.

5. AMBASSADOR OBSERVED THAT, WHETHER THEY LIKE IT OR NOT, OPERATORS OF SHIP WOULD PROBABLY BE UNABLE TO AVOID PICKING UP SOME REFUGEES, I.E., THOSE FROM SINKING BOATS. MR. MOONEYHAM AGREED THAT THIS WAS PROBABLY INEVITABLE, AND ASKED WHAT

EMBASSY COULD DO TO HELP IN THIS CASE. AMBASSADOR
SAID WE WOULD DO WHAT WE COULD, ARRANGING TO INTERVIEW THOSE
REFUGEES PICKED UP AT SEA TO DETERMINE WHETHER THEY COULD BE
BROUGHT TO U.S.

6. COMMENT: WITHOUT IN ANY WAY QUESTIONING SINCERITY OR DEDICATION
OF WORLD VISION REPRESENTATIVES, WE HAVE RESERVATIONS ABOUT
PRACTICALITY OF PROPOSED SHIP PROJECT. MODIFIED PLAN, HOW-
EVER, APPEARS TO HAVE LESS POTENTIAL FOR CREATING INADVERTENT
DIFFICULTIES IN HANDLING REFUGEE FLOW THAN ORIGINAL PROPOSAL.
HOLDRIDGE

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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 17 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
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Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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